CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for dynamically extending a firewall, the method comprising the steps of :

(a) establishing a connection with a remote system;

(b) receiving an identifier from the remote system; and

(c) using the identifier to filter information received through the connection with the remote system.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein step (a) comprises initiating a serial connection with the remote system.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein step (a) comprises:

(a-a) contacting the remote system;

(a-b) providing the remote system with authentication credentials;

(a-c) receiving a serial connection from the remote system in response to the authentication credentials.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein step (b) comprises:

(b-a) requesting an identifier from the remote system; and

(b-b) receiving an identifier in response to the request.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein the identifier from the remote system is an Internet Protocol (IP) address.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein step (c) comprises the steps of:

(c-a) receiving a packet of information from the remote system;

(c-b) examining the packet of information to determine its destination address

(c-c) comparing the destination address to the identifier received from the remote system;

(c-d) accepting the packet if its destination address matches the identifer; and

(c-e) rejecting the packet if its destination address does not match the identifier.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein the remote system chooses the identifier transmitted from a pool of identifiers.

8. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step:

(e) assigning the identifier received from the remote system to the local system.

9. The method of claim 8 further comprising the steps:

(f) receiving a second identifier from the remote system;

(g) assigning the second identifier to service management logic on the local system.

(h) using the second identifier to filter information received through the connection with the remote system;

10. A method for dynamically extending a firewall, the method comprising the steps of :

(a) receiving a connection from a remote system;

(b) receiving an identifier from the remote system; and

(c) using the identifier to filter information received through the connection with the remote system.

11. The method of claim 10 wherein step (a) comprises the initiation of a serial connection by a remote system.

12. The method of claim 10 wherein step (a) comprises:

(a-a) receiving a call from the remote system;

(a-b) receiving authentication credentials from the remote system;

(a-c) initiating a serial connection with the remote system in response to the authentication credentials.

13. The method of claim 10 wherein step (b) comprises:

(b-a) requesting an identifier from the remote system; and

(b-b) receiving an identifier in response to the request.

14. The method of claim 10 wherein the identifier from the remote system is an Internet Protocol (IP) address.

15. The method of claim 10 wherein step (c) comprises the steps of:

(c-a) receiving a packet of information from the remote system;

(c-b) examining the packet of information to determine its destination address

(c-c) comparing the destination address to the identifier received from the remote system;

(c-d) accepting the packet if its destination address matches the identifer; and

(c-e) rejecting the packet if its destination address does not match the identifier.

16. The method of claim 10 wherein the remote system chooses the identifier transmitted from a pool of identifiers.

17. The method of claim 10 further comprising the step:

(e) assigning the identifier received from the remote system to the local system.

18. The method of claim 17 further comprising the steps:

(f) receiving a second identifier from the remote system;

(g) using the second identifier to filter information received through the connection with the remote system;

(h) assigning the second identifier to service management logic on the local system.